



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## ON THE NEED FOR A SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION.

BY ALLEYNE IRELAND, F. R. G. S.,

AUTHOR OF "TROPICAL COLONIZATION," "THE FAR EASTERN TROPICS," ETC.

Those who have had occasion to make a special study of colonial affairs cannot have failed to observe that the subject of colonial administration is one which is assuming from year to year a higher degree of importance, and is drawing to itself a constantly increasing share of public attention.

This access of interest in a branch of investigation hitherto very generally regarded as a curious by-product rather than as a vital part of Political Science, has served the useful purpose of disclosing to the student in this neglected field the failure of the great majority of recent writers to approach the colonial problem in that scientific spirit which in other departments of study is alone held to justify a public expression of opinion.

Indeed, so wide is the range of occupations which have added their followers to the ranks of writers upon colonial government—a range which embraces lawyers, doctors, soldiers, sailors, politicians, presidential candidates, ministers of the gospel, labor leaders, poets, geologists, engineers, and professors of subjects as wide apart as ethics and zoology—that one is almost tempted to believe that a knowledge of calligraphy is regarded as the only qualification necessary for a writer on colonial topics.

It would be impossible to exaggerate the injury which has been done to the cause of a scientific study of colonial administration by the torrent of ignorant and often violently prejudiced writing which has in recent years flooded the periodical press of this country and overflowed into the book stores. Not only has the public mind become saturated with misinformation, but the easy confidence with which uninformed writers have handled the most difficult administrative prob-

lems has fostered the idea that the political principles and social ideals of the North American continent afford a perfectly satisfactory standard by which to adjust the administrative policy for the governance of tropical races.

I propose in this address to examine some of the fallacies which have vitiated the greater portion of the recent literature of colonization, and to suggest certain general principles for the regulation of serious inquiry in the future. I consider myself fortunate in that my views are to be laid before a body which is at once capable of weighing whatever force may lie in my argument, of detecting any errors into which I may have fallen, and of lending to such portion of my opinion as it may accept an authority which it would be alike presumptuous and futile to claim for an individual view.

Before proceeding further I may say that throughout this address I use the word "colony" and its derivatives to express that degree of administrative and political dependence which is found only in tropical and sub-tropical areas where the mass of the population is of a different race from that of the sovereign nation. There is in fact no problem of colonial administration in the great self-governing colonies, where the population is preponderantly white, since the administration of such territories is in the hands of elected legislatures and differs only in name from the administration of countries which are independent sovereign states.

That fallacy which more than any other has introduced a serious element of confusion into the discussion of colonial affairs in this country—a fallacy which has permeated the literary expression of the anti-imperialist movement—is the inclusion within one series of premises of matter bearing upon several perfectly distinct and entirely different questions; that is to say upon the question as to whether there is any moral justification for the subjection of one race under the rule of another; the question as to whether such subjection is in conformity with the Constitution of the United States; the question as to whether, if the act of subjection is morally justifiable in theory and is also constitutional, the probability of misgovernment of the subjected race is not great enough to

over-ride the theoretical permissibility of the relation; and finally the question as to whether any advantage is likely to accrue to the sovereign state from its control of dependencies.

The separate discussion of these subjects would furnish us with a great deal of interesting and valuable material; and each question is probably susceptible of an elucidation which would effect to the satisfaction of serious students a final disposition of the points raised. But the confusion of these issues has produced a dialectic of colonization utterly false and worthless, and has obscured the vital fact that the four matters for determination belong respectively to the distinct domains of morals, law, administration and economics.

If this confounding of principles were the only serious defect in recent utterances on the subject of colonization the results would be sufficiently deplorable; but as a matter of fact it has very commonly been the case that where writers have avoided a confusion of categories they have fallen into the error of seeking to determine the moral equation of colonization by an inductive process from observed results instead of by a deductive method from the first principles of morals and of ethics.

Thus the morality of colonization has been made to depend upon the character of the effects which race subjection has produced in various instances. This has resulted in the formation of two schools of opinion, one maintaining the morality of colonization on the ground that the results are generally favorable to the subject race, the other condemning its immorality because the results are generally unfavorable; and we find writers of distinction who change from one principle to the other as the progression of their information brings into view facts favorable or otherwise in regard to the effect of colonial government upon subject races.

Let me refer to a single instance of this kind of thing. In an address before the American Historical Association in 1901 Mr. Charles Francis Adams said "What is true of India is true of Egypt. Schools, roads, irrigation, law and order, and protection from attack, she has them all—

'But what avail the plow or sail,  
Or land or life, if freedom fail.'

"A formidable proposition, I state it without limitations, meaning to challenge contradiction, I submit that there is not an instance in all recorded history . . . . where a so-called inferior race or community has been elevated in its character . . . . through a condition of dependency or tutelage."

In 1906, in an article entitled "Reflex Light from Africa" which appeared in the *Century Magazine* for May, Mr. Charles Francis Adams says: "One thing seems clear, without being reduced to servitude, the inferior race must be recognized as such, and, in some way, so dealt with. Until subject to British domination, the Soudan, and Uganda also, were internal hells and external nuisances; and as they then were, time out of mind they had been. One has but to read Baker's account of the conditions which prevailed in that region anterior to 1890 to appreciate the utter fallacy of the theoretical rights-of-man and philanthropical African-and-brother doctrines. In plain vernacular English, they are all 'rot';—'rot' which I myself have indulged in to a considerable extent, and, in face of observable facts which would not down, have had to outgrow. . . . . The British policy as seen in operation in Egypt may be,—I believe it is,—a great discovery,—a veritable advance in human polity. . . . . As for British rule in the Soudan and Uganda, it dates only from 1898. That thus far it has been one of unmixed beneficence, I bear witness."

To the student of colonial administration Mr. Adams' frank abandonment of his former views is less remarkable than the unshaken confidence with which for many years he expressed those earlier opinions which as soon as he made any practical study of the subject he was forced to disavow.

There is indeed a school of thought which has formulated what is in fact a real principle in regard to the colonial relation; and this principle is that the worst possible form of self-government, however disastrous and oppressive its operation, is a moral phenomenon; and that the best possible form

of dependent government, whatever its advantages for the dependent race, is an immoral phenomenon.

Now although I believe this principle to be utterly false in substance, it has at least the form of a scientific theory, for it does not seek to furnish a moral axiom depending for its morality upon the observed results of its own operation, but views all facts from the standpoint of a single great hypothesis, namely that the ultimate regeneration of humanity can be effected only by the extension of self-government.

To those holding this view the idea of self-government is the major premise of every syllogism of a sociological schema, and bears to their investigations just the same relation as the law of gravitation bears to the investigations of the astronomer or the atomic theory to those of the chemist.

In point of form this is just as it should be, for it is clear that the morality of the principle involved in colonial subjection cannot be judged by the results of a colonial policy, the rightness or wrongness of the principle being necessarily inherent and entirely apart from and prior to its application.

If this were not so, and the morality of the principle were made to depend upon the effects of its application, there could exist side by side two moral principles relating to the same matter and in complete conflict with one another. To put the matter in a word, the morality of the colonial relation cannot be affirmed from any number of instances in which that relation can be shown to have achieved beneficent results for the dependent race, nor can its immorality be predicated from a history of oppression and tyranny. If the morality of colonization is to be determined it can only be done by viewing the subject from the standpoint of some great hypothesis, such, for instance, as the right of the world as a whole to enjoy the natural resources of the whole earth.

But this very method of judging by results, which is false and unscientific when applied to the moral principle of colonization, is precisely the method which must be followed when the subject under investigation is an applied science of colonial administration, for in such an inquiry it must be determined at the outset what those objects are with the attain-

ment of which colonial administration is concerned; the examination of methods must follow, and it is only by finding out how far these methods have in practice produced the desired results that a code of administrative principles can be formulated.

There has been a great lack of frankness amongst writers on colonial affairs, in Europe as well as in this country, as to the motives which lead the great powers to maintain dependencies in tropical and sub-tropical countries.

The attitude of those who say "We have gone to this barbarous country in order to uplift the native, to confer on him the blessings of Christianity, to civilize him, and to make his burden light" is only a degree less foolish than that of those who say "We have gone to this fertile and rich territory for the wicked purpose of developing its resources, and as our only object is wealth we can succeed only by oppressing the native, by cheating him, and by subjecting him to the horrors of a cruel and tyrannical administration.

The plain fact is that, with the exception of the Brookes in Sarawak, no one has ever undertaken the administration of a dependency from simple motives of pure benevolence towards the natives. The object of colonization in the tropics is and always has been, with the exception I have noted, to establish and develop a profitable commerce. That this is in itself a perfectly legitimate purpose and one which, if carried out by humane methods, is compatible with a general improvement in the condition of the natives, can hardly be disputed.

If we accept commerce as being the mainspring of tropical colonization it becomes a very simple matter to establish certain standards which may be used for the purpose of comparing with one another various systems of colonial administration.

Broadly speaking, it may be said that there are two active principles from which two totally different methods of colonization derive their main characteristics—one is the principle of development, the other the principle of exploitation.

The character of a colonial administration which is concerned with the development of a country is almost always

beneficent, for it rests upon the assumption that in the long run the best commerce may be established if the native population is prosperous and contented, if the country is gradually responding to a scientific utilization of its resources, and if the trade is so conducted as to yield a fair share of its benefits to the native.

Where exploitation alone is the aim of the administration the character of the foreign rule is sure to be oppressive and will in all probability be barbarous and inhuman. The difference of method which follows the adoption of one or another of these principles of development or exploitation is due to a perfectly simple cause, namely that where the aim is development the sovereign power has the strongest possible motives for securing a progressive improvement in the territory and in its people, whereas if exploitation alone is desired the authorities devote themselves to getting as much as possible out of the country in the shortest possible time, regardless of the permanent injury that may be done to the true interests of the territory.

Not a little confusion has arisen in recent discussions of colonial affairs through the failure to perceive the radical difference between a policy of development and one of exploitation. My attention was particularly directed to this confusion of ideas when I was in the Philippine Islands in 1904. I then found that everybody who approached the Government with proposals for starting various industries—offering to introduce capital into the Islands and to afford employment to the people at fair rates of remuneration—was told that the American Government did not propose to have people come along and exploit the Philippine Islands.

We may, I think, lay down the principle that the great test of any system of colonial administration is the degree to which it serves the end of a peaceful development of the resources of the territory with which it is concerned; and that that system is best which insures fair treatment for the native, economy in the conduct of public affairs, and the general betterment of the social conditions of the people.

This brings the discussion to a point where it is possible



to present some suggestions in regard to the scientific study of colonial administration, and it is necessary before going further to determine whether the purpose of such study is to be essentially one of historical research or whether its chief aim is to be the practical solution of such problems as arise when persons of one race are administering, with a definite object, the affairs of another race.

In order to emphasize the radical difference between these two objects and the wide divergence of the roads which must be traveled in their pursuit it is only necessary to observe that if the purpose is historical the element of comparison will be introduced into the inquiry on the basis of a broad range of time in a narrow field, whereas if the investigation is directed toward the practical end to which I have referred the comparison of phenomena will be made as far as possible within a narrow range of time and in a broad field.

Upon the selection of one or another of these guiding motives must depend the form which the investigation is to assume.

In so far as there has been any serious study of colonial administration amongst English-speaking people it has until recently assumed almost entirely the historic form. There are plenty of books dealing historically with the administration of one or another of the British dependencies—from many hundreds of such works I may mention Chesney's "Indian Polity" and Rodway's "History of British Guiana" as typical of the kind of books I have in mind.

But works on colonial administration as such, that is to say works dealing with colonial administration as a science and not as one aspect of local colonial history, are extremely rare. Excluding some half-dozen books by living writers I doubt if there are in the English language a dozen volumes on the science of colonial administration. It would indicate unusual research if one should add to the names of Smith, Brougham, Merivale, Wakefield, and Lewis. Even the works of these writers are, with few exceptions, to be classed rather as contributions to our knowledge of colonial policy and colonial constitutions than of colonial administration.

Without wishing in any way to belittle the importance of the local historical treatment of colonial administration I cannot help feeling that more than enough has been done along that line to supply any demand which has yet arisen or is likely to arise, and that there is urgent need for a scientific study of colonial administration as a practical matter in which the leading nations of the world have a very serious interest.

If it is accepted that the object of the inquiry is to discover the best means of dealing with the problems which face those nations which have undertaken the administration of territories in a state of political and administrative dependence it is not difficult to define the scope of the investigation; and the question of methods of study presents no peculiar complications.

The limits set to this paper compel me to confine my attention to one aspect of this study; and I will therefore select what seems to me to be by far the most important consideration to be held in view by students, namely that no amount of intensive research in one dependency can lend any weight to an opinion on the science of colonial administration. It is by comparative work alone that any useful view of the subject can be obtained, for it is clear that the utility of any study of colonial administration must depend ultimately upon the comparison of methods and results in colonies in which the general conditions, social, climatic, and economic, are sufficiently similar to admit of measurement by a single standard or set of standards.

When this principle is adopted, a survey of the whole colonial field will at once suggest to the student that the colonies fall into natural groups which lend themselves readily to the comparative method of study. Thus there is a West Indian group, which may properly include the colonies on the mainland of South America; an East Indian group, which embraces the Indo-Malayan and Indo-Chinese colonies; a West African group, an East African group, and so on. The Indian Peninsula forms a group by itself and furnishes within itself material for a fascinating investigation.

I do not mean to imply that the general conditions in any

of these groups are identical in each member of the group but simply that in certain fundamentals there is a vastly greater difference between the members of one group and another than between members of the same group.

Thus India is cut off from all other groups by its vast area, its enormous population, the variability of its climate, and by its peculiar social institutions, whereas Burma and the Philippine Islands fall into one group because apart from difference of religion there are no great points of divergence which invalidate comparisons between the two territories.

There is a further point of great importance which places India in a category by itself. In any of the other groups which I have enumerated the interest of the student will be fixed upon the observation of widely different methods of administration applied to territories which in a general way have much in common. For instance in the East Indian group there is a fairly close similarity between the Philippine Islands, Java, the Malay Peninsula, French Indo-China and Burma. Yet in these countries we find a great variety of administrative systems—the Crown Colony system, Chartered Company Government, Independent Government, the Residential system, the Indian Provincial system, and the less easily defined methods of the French, the Dutch, and the Americans.

In India the character of the problem is exactly reversed, for here we find under one central administration territories as widely separated by every consideration of race and climate as the Punjab and the Madras Presidency, presenting differences as great as those existing between Russia and Portugal.

It is seen at once that what enables us to deal with India as a group is the general similarity of the administrative methods operating in a varied field, and that the group cohesion in what I have called the East Indian group depends upon the similarity of the general conditions under which a great variety of administrative systems operate.

The point which I wish to make is that for the purposes of a scientific study of colonial administration it is neces-

sary to so divide the material that there is either a comparison of the results of different methods applied to broadly identical problems, or a comparison of the results of broadly identical methods in widely different circumstances.

It is the general failure to preserve one common element—either the method or the condition to be met—that has made a vast amount of recent writing on colonial administration little better than waste paper.

Perhaps the best example which can be cited of this absence of nexus is the common attempt to define the political future of the Philippines in the terms of Japanese achievement.

There is one point which I think I should deal with before I bring this paper to a close and that is to answer the question, which is constantly being urged upon the public, why, if trade is the chief object of colonization, cannot the native be left to rule his own country after his own fashion and the foreigner content himself with the commerce?

In elucidation of this point I may quote a few paragraphs from a paper which I read last year before the Royal Colonial Institute in London.

“If we go far enough back in the history of the world we may, no doubt, reach a time when it might of truth be said of every State that it had a right to its own bad government. But in order to find a period in which this proposition would hold it is necessary to go at least as far back as the time when the whole of human society was in its tribal stage, when each community was self-supporting, and was independent, alike in the matter of supplies and markets, of all other communities—in a word, to a time when navigation and international trade had not created a wider relation than that of individuals within an isolated clan.

“From the moment when international commerce had its beginnings the question of the character of governments ceased to be a purely internal concern of each State, for there then arose a general obligation, based upon obvious considerations of expediency, that no country should maintain a government so greatly inferior to the best type known at the period as to threaten the existence of the international trade.

“ There are very few conditions to which commerce cannot adjust itself. It may be disturbed by the operation of tariffs; it may be seriously affected by the insidious working of bounties on production; it feels the effects of great strikes; it is most sensitive to the influence of climate; but to those elements and to others of a similar character commerce adjusts itself by means of fluctuating prices, by the flow of capital from one country to another, and from one industry to another, and by a hundred other inner workings of its system.

“ It is, however, of the utmost importance to realize that there are two conditions to the absence of which commerce cannot adjust itself—two conditions which are absolutely essential to the existence of any great commerce at the present day; one is reasonable protection of life and property, and the other is the presence in every important trade area of competent and impartial courts for the adjustment of commercial disputes and for the enforcement of contracts.

“ Now these two conditions, without which modern commerce cannot exist, are precisely the conditions which native rule in the tropics never afforded; and it is ultimately to this cause that we must trace the substitution of European for native methods of administration throughout the heat belt.”

The great variety of administrative methods which have been adopted by the European powers and by the United States in their various dependencies and the varying degree of success and failure which has attended their application is the material to which the student must turn if he wishes to embark upon a scientific study of colonial administration.

## DISCUSSION.

POULTNEY BIGELOW, taking up the theme of Alleyne Ireland rather than the paper for which he had been booked, dwelt upon the importance of preparing the ground for scientific treatment of colonial questions.

On many vital points, said the speaker, public opinion in the United States is opposed to measures advocated by such practical students of colonial life as Mr. Ireland.